Neglect of sports in the country

356. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whehter Union Government are well aware the sports in the country have become a child play or has been commercialized ones;

(b) if so, in view of this position, only cricket is an out playing sports game and there is no mention anywhere about National importance games like Kabaddi, Long jump, High jump, Indian style wrestling, etc;

(c) whether hockey has also been reduced to become an unwanted game of India; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Union Government for the upliftment and promoting the sports in the country?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Union Government is well aware of the need to promote and develop various sports disciplines in the country.

(b) and (d) While it is a true that circket has become very popular, it may be noted that the Government of India is not giving any financial assistance to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the national apex federation for cricket. On the contrary, the BCCI have offered financial assistance for the development of other sports disciplines including both those that have attracted commercial sponsorship and those that have not. Government is also accutely conscious of the need to substantially increase the access to organize sports and game for children, adolescent and all sections of youth, both in collaboration with schools and other educational institutions and in collaboration with Panchayati Raj Institutions and other local bodies. Towards this end, a Panchayat Yuva Khel Abhiyan is under consideration. Government is giving assistance to the apex-level National Sports Federations for various other games and sports, including Kabaddi, Athletic (which includes High and Long Jump), wrestling and Hockey which are Priority Disciplines. Development/promotion of sports and the scouting and nurturing of talent, is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments and the National Sports Federations (NSFs) concerned. However, the Government supplements the efforts of NSFs by providing financial

assistance for training and participation of sportspersons/teams in international tournaments abroad, holding of national and international tournaments in India, assistance for purchase of equipment, training of national teams/sportspersons under Indian and foreign coaches with requisite technical and scientific back up, and also through schemes of Sports Authority of India.

In additon, Government of India is running schemes relating to incentives for promotion of sports activities which, *inter-alia* comprise Sports Funds for pension to meritorious sports persons, Promotion of Sports and Games in Schools, Rural Sports Programme, Sports Scholarship Scheme, National Sports Development Funds and National Welfare Funds for sports persons.

(c) No, Sir.

Assisstance to Kerala

357. SHRI K.E. ISMIL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chief Minister of Kerala met Prime Minister recently to discuss about some vital problems of the State and seek help and assistance of the Centre, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the issue of the inclusion of a few more districts of Kerala in the proposed package for peasants in the background of mass suicide of peasantry was discussed;

(c) whether he requested the Prime Minister to give political clearance and financial assistance for Vizhinjam Deep Water International Container Transhipment Terminal; and

(d) if so, the response of the Prime Minister?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) Chief Minister of Kerala submitted a Memorandum to the Hon. Prime Minister seeking help and assistance of the Government of India and discussed with him various issues of the State including a package for four districts involving agraian problems, revision of borrowing ceiling of the State and clearance to Vizhinjam Deep Water International Container Transhipment Terminal.